

# Quarterly NEWS-LETTER

OF THE BOOK CLUB OF  
CALIFORNIA

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## CONTENTS

A Resume of 1936 — Contemporary California Short Stories — San Francisco 120 Years Ago — Publications as Christmas Gifts — Elected to Membership — Memorial — Gift Memberships — Notes on Publications — Miscellany.



## A RESUME OF 1936

by ALFRED SUTRO, President

IT IS a pleasure to report that during this twenty-fourth year of its existence the Club has shown a moderate but sustained and healthy growth. This is the third consecutive year in which it has been possible to announce an improvement in the Club's condition over that of the year before. Such a satisfactory showing is due in large part to the generous support which the Club has had from its members and it is to be hoped that this support will continue.

Since the first of the year, 83 new members have joined the Club. Losses in membership, covering deaths, resignations, and those written off for non-payment of dues, totaled 24, leaving a net increase of 59 for the period from January 1 to November 25. This brings the roll slightly above 450—the highest point since 1930—and gives promise that the limit of 500 will be reached next year.

The chief publishing activity during 1936 was the California Literary Pamphlets series, which is being completed this month by the distribution of the sixth and final pamphlet. This, the third of the Club's annual series of keepsakes, has been well received by the members. The approval of the current series has been gratifying to the directors, and it proved helpful to them in reaching a decision as to the form and subject-matter of the fourth series, which is announced and described in this number of the News-Letter.

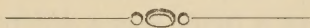
Occasion should be taken here to point out that the success of the several series of keepsakes has been due in large part to the support and cooperation which the Club received from authors, publishers and printers: the first two by generously contributing forewords or granting the right to use copyrighted material, the latter by the special pains they took in assuring the typographical excellence of their work. The printers of the Pacific Coast have uniformly regarded work done for the Club's series as something meriting their best care and attention. In many cases the time and effort expended have been far in excess of the pecuniary return. This kind of cooperation is, of course, very valuable and I am happy to express here the Club's thanks and appreciation.



In the matter of book publishing, the Club this year has been less active than usual. Only one publication, *A Sojourn at San Francisco Bay in 1816*, will be issued during 1936. Two other books were scheduled for publication this year but in each case delay in the completion or delivery of the manuscript prevented bringing out the book as originally planned. Barring further delays, now unforeseen, both should appear during 1937.

On the whole, 1936 has been a very satisfactory year for the Club. It has been our good fortune to have retained the interest and support of our old members and to have added during the year several scores of new names to the roll. However, we still need some 50 additional members to bring the enrollment to its limit and thus to assure proper support for our activities. To this end, the continued cooperation of all the members is warmly invited.

In 1937, as heretofore, the Club will continue to devote its best efforts to activities designed to serve the interests of its book-collecting members and to enhance the pleasures to be derived from the pursuit of this delightful hobby.



## CONTEMPORARY CALIFORNIA SHORT STORIES

THE Club's fourth series of keepsakes, to be distributed to the members next year, will be similar to the *Literary Pamphlets* in form, page-size, and other details of typographical arrangement. Like the present series, it will consist of six pamphlets, to be issued bi-monthly, each of which will be designed and printed by a different Pacific Coast printer.

The new series, however, will differ from all three of its predecessors in that it will present the work of contemporary Western authors. The decision to issue this time material by living writers was influenced by a criticism sometimes made that the Club has tended to place too much emphasis upon California literature of the past, to the neglect of equally important work currently being produced. The 1937 series, therefore, will present material by contemporary authors, related in theme and treatment to contemporary conditions, and reflecting contemporary literary trends. The new group will consist entirely of short stories, not only for the purpose of giving unity to the series and because short stories are well suited to pamphlet publication, but also because among contemporary California authors are many widely known for their skillful handling of this literary form.

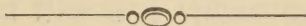
The method of selecting the stories will be as follows: Six well-known California authors will be selected for representation in the series. Each writer selected will be invited to choose for publication in the series his (or her) favorite short story. In addition the author will be asked to contribute a brief foreword to be printed with his story. In this he may relate the reasons for his choice of story, or state his theories of the short story as a literary form.

The 1937 series will consist, then, of six short stories by six leading California authors, each story to be of its author's own selection and to be accompanied by a foreword from his pen. As usual, the printing of the pamphlets will be assigned to well-known Pacific Coast printers, and the complete series will again offer an attractive variety of sound typographical treatment.



The Club believes that in interest and beauty, and in permanent value, Contemporary California Short Stories will prove no less desirable than the Club's three preceding series. Like them, it will be limited to 500 sets, one of which will be distributed, without charge, to each member. None will be available for sale or for general distribution. For the convenient preservation of the series, slipcases will presently be made and offered (at cost) to the members.

Part One of the new series will be ready for distribution about February 1, 1937, and the remaining five parts will follow bi-monthly through the year. The authors, titles and printers of the various pamphlets will be announced from time to time as the arrangements are completed.



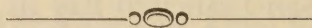
#### SAN FRANCISCO 120 YEARS AGO

SOME days ago, members received an announcement of A Sojourn at San Francisco Bay in 1816, the Club's Christmas publication for 1936. This is the only book to be issued by the Club during the year, and the response of the members has been both prompt and enthusiastic. The orders already on hand make it clear that the edition of 250 copies will be exhausted very soon after publication.

Written by one of the members of a Russian scientific expedition that visited the harbor in the early part of the last century, this informal and revealing account of the life at San Francisco's mission and presidio presents an excellent picture of California during the Spanish era. Of equal importance with the text are the reproductions of the famous series of drawings of the San

San Francisco Bay region by the expedition's artist, Louis Choris. First published in Paris in 1822, these handsome lithographs, many of them in color, have long been admired by those who have seen them in the rare original edition. Their appearance in the present work marks the first time this series has been republished in its entirety, and in the sizes and coloring of their first appearance. Reproduced by collotype and colored at the Press, the drawings retain to a remarkable degree the beauty and quality of the originals.

Designed, printed and bound at The Grabhorn Press, *A Sojourn at San Francisco Bay in 1816* is an uncommonly handsome example of bookmaking. At the moderate price of \$5.00 per copy, it will not (you may take our word for it) remain long in print. If you have not yet ordered, do so today; you will find an order-card enclosed. And perhaps you will wish an extra copy or two for Christmas; the book will make a handsome and appropriate gift.



#### PUBLICATIONS AS CHRISTMAS GIFTS

by ALBERT M. BENDER, Chairman Publication Committee

ENCLOSED with this number of the News-Letter, members will find a list of the Club's publications now in print, and an order-card. The list contains twenty-two titles, a considerably smaller number than was available a year ago. In fact, the number of Club publications on hand has been growing steadily less for the past four or five years. During the coming months a further reduction is sure to take place. Of nearly half the titles listed, the number of copies remaining is not above twenty each, and many of these will soon go out of print.

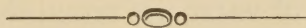


I mention these points because I believe they will interest all members who may be considering adding to their own collections of the Club's publications, or selecting some of the titles as holiday gifts. In either case it should need no persuasion to convince purchasers of the wisdom of making selections while there is still a sufficiently varied list of titles from which to choose.

To many of the members it is unnecessary to state that the Club books make unusually suitable Christmas gifts. Such members long ago made that discovery and they have been giving Club publications each Christmas ever since. To those, however, who have yet to avail themselves of this service, it may be pointed out that all the books on the enclosed list are interesting and carefully selected as to texts, that they are designed and produced by the foremost California printers, and that, their sale being restricted to Club members, they have a further advantage as gifts in the fact that they cannot be obtained elsewhere.

Orders for publications intended as holiday gifts will be promptly and carefully filled. Members who prefer that their selections be sent by the Club direct to the recipients, will please send instructions to that effect, and forward their cards or other messages they wish enclosed with the gifts. Packages will be mailed so as to arrive at, or shortly before, Christmas.

This year we believe more members than ever will make use of this convenient method of presenting unique, appropriate and inexpensive gifts. You are cordially invited to make your selections from the enclosed list and to forward your order today.



# The Book Club of California

## ELECTED TO MEMBERSHIP

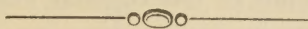
THE following names have been added to the roll since September 1:

<i>Member</i>		<i>Sponsor</i>
Mrs. Hugh S. Allen	Bakersfield, Cal.	Oscar Lewis
W. H. Archer	Pasadena, Cal.	Oscar Lewis
Mrs. Hans Barkan	San Francisco, Cal.	Oscar Lewis
Mrs. Louise Farrow Barr	Piedmont, Cal.	Oscar Lewis
Fred W. Bloch	San Francisco, Cal.	R. H. Shainwald
Mrs. Angus Gordon Boggs	San Francisco, Cal.	John Howell
James R. Brehm	Pasadena, Cal.	Oscar Lewis
Mrs. William Carnall	Los Angeles, Cal.	Oscar Lewis
Miss Frances D. Cooper	Pasadena, Cal.	Oscar Lewis
Robert E. Dodge	Ashland, Oregon	Oscar Lewis
H. G. Fairman	Los Angeles, Cal.	Oscar Lewis
Guy J. Griffen	La Canada, Cal.	Oscar Lewis
Royal Arch Gunnison	San Francisco, Cal.	Carl E. Melugin
Gordon G. Hair	Los Angeles, Cal.	George Fields
Walter D. Heller	San Francisco, Cal.	R. H. Shainwald
Mrs. Thomas Hutton	San Francisco, Cal.	Oscar Lewis
Mrs. Milbank Johnson	Pasadena, Cal.	Oscar Lewis
Mrs. Gustave Lachman	San Mateo, Cal.	Oscar Lewis
Stuart N. Lake	San Diego, Cal.	Oscar Lewis
E. J. L'Esperance	Los Angeles, Cal.	Oscar Lewis
Mrs. Claire McCarthy	Berkeley, Cal.	Harmer E. Davis
Frank McKee	San Rafael, Cal.	Oscar Lewis
Merced County Free Library	Merced, Cal.	Oscar Lewis
Edwards H. Metcalf	Los Angeles, Cal.	Oscar Lewis
Dr. Mary Young Moore	Los Angeles, Cal.	Oscar Lewis
Clifford A. Nelson	San Francisco, Cal.	Francis L. Auger
Oakland Public Library	Oakland, Cal.	Oscar Lewis
Miss M. Gertrude Roddy	San Francisco, Cal.	Oscar Lewis
Sydney Sanner	Los Angeles, Cal.	Oscar Lewis
Santa Monica Public Library	Santa Monica, Cal.	Oscar Lewis
Bertram F. Shipman	New York, N. Y.	Alfred Sutro
Norman H. Sloane	San Francisco, Cal.	Frank McKee
Mrs. Leon Sloss, Jr.	San Francisco, Cal.	Oscar Lewis
Mrs. Richard Sloss	San Francisco, Cal.	Mrs. John I. Walter
Salvador Ugarte	Mexico City, Mexico	Garfield D. Merner
William P. Wreden	Burlingame, Cal.	Jake Zeitlin

The Club continues to make substantial progress toward restoring the roll to its maximum of 500. To date, the number of vacancies remaining is less than 50,



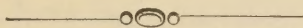
and the indications are that these will all be filled early in 1937. Meantime, members who have been planning to propose the names of friends are reminded that by doing so now the latter will be assured of prompt election and of immediate participation in Club activities.



### MEMORIAL

SINCE December 1, 1935, the following members have died:

<i>Member</i>	<i>Elected</i>
Dr. Herman M. Adler . . . . .	1935
Joseph Bancroft . . . . .	1927
Phil B. Bekeart . . . . .	1922
John Gribbel . . . . .	1918
John J. Johnck . . . . .	1932
William A. Lieber . . . . .	1918



### GIFT MEMBERSHIPS

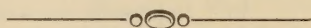
FOR the past three years the Club has, early each December, sent members a circular describing the gift membership plan. For the benefit of those who may not have received this information this year, or who did not have time to read it carefully, we outline the main features here.

Any member in good standing may confer a gift membership. To do so, it is necessary only to forward the recipient's name and address to the Club; if you like, use the application card recently sent you. In any case, your application should reach the Club a few days before Christmas—the earlier the better. On its receipt, the person whose name you propose will be sent a card announcing your gift. With the card will be sent a set of the California Literary Pamphlets, and a copy of the

News-Letter, and a folder outlining the Club's aims and activities. All this, your new member will receive in his Christmas mail. In addition, he will enjoy the benefits of membership throughout 1937, including a set of next year's series of keepsakes. And for all this the cost to you is that of the regular yearly dues, \$10.00.

Last December, in forwarding an application for a gift membership, a member wrote: "I think this makes an ideal gift for a book-lover, and it is a real bargain at ten dollars." We believe you will think so, too.

But we must close with a note of warning: Only a scant twenty-five sets of the California Literary Pamphlets series remain available and the number of gift memberships is necessarily limited to that number. Therefore, please forward your application promptly.



#### NOTES ON PUBLICATIONS

FROM present indications, the Club's 1937 publication programme will be considerably more active than it has been for several years past. Three books are definitely scheduled for publication next year, and several possibilities of more than average promise are also under consideration.

Of the three titles for which arrangements have been virtually completed, two were announced earlier this year: except for unforeseen complications, both would already have appeared. One is a projected printing of *The Helmet of Mambrino*, Clarence King's entertaining account of his search for an authentic relic of Don Quixote. The second, outlined in the last number of this quarterly, is a proposed publication relating to Cato's Moral Distichs—a little-known curiosity of early American print-



ing produced in 1735 in the shop of Benjamin Franklin, then a young Philadelphia printer.

If present plans hold, the last of this trio of forthcoming books—but probably the first to appear—will be ready for printing shortly after the first of the year. An announcement giving full information about the project will reach members toward the end of January, so we shall prudently refrain from disclosing any of the details here. We do predict, however, that it will prove one of the most desirable (and popular) publications the Club has offered members for some time.

Meantime, as Chairman Bender of the Publication Committee points out in this issue, a continuing demand for the Club's earlier publications, together with the fact that few new titles have been added during the past several years, have had the effect of reducing the Club's stock of publications, both as regards the variety of titles and the number of available copies. With the list of out-of-print publications steadily growing longer, the necessity for maintaining the active list by a more frequent addition of new titles becomes obvious.

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¶ A member writes expressing his conviction that not all the authors selected for inclusion in the last two series of keepsakes can properly be called "outstanding figures in California literature." He goes on to propose that in a future series the choice be determined by a poll of the members. Although polls can hardly be regarded nowadays as infallible, his suggestion is nonetheless an interesting one and well worth a trial.

¶ Members may have observed that a number of public and university libraries have recently taken out membership. This may well be evidence of a wider recognition of the value of the Club's activities; at any rate, one effect is that its publications are thereby being made accessible to many who would not otherwise have an opportunity to see them.

¶ The distribution this month of Part Six of the California Literary Pamphlets completes the third of the Club's annual series. Members are advised to check over their sets at this time and, if any of the parts are found to be missing, to communicate with the Club. Extra copies of all the parts, except Number One, remain on hand. While the limited supply lasts, these will be furnished to members at fifty cents each.

¶ In the last issue appeared a letter in which a member suggested that the Club set about assembling the nucleus of a some day important Library of Pacific Coast Typography. It would not be correct to say that the suggestion created a profound sensation—but on the other hand neither was it completely ignored. In proof of the latter statement, the following may be reported: A member wrote endorsing the plan and urging that a special effort be made to secure while they are still obtainable as many specimens as possible of books printed in San Francisco "between 1890 and 1906." That period, our correspondent went on, saw local printers breaking away from the old set forms and designing books "as lively and original as any then being made in America." A second member intimated that once the collection was started and its permanence assured he would lend a hand toward the purchase of items that might be particularly desired. A local printer volunteered to present the collection with copies of a number of his own early publications. Finally, a member in the East wrote: "If your organization had started such a library twenty years ago and had added only a few wisely chosen books each month, today you would have one of the most important collections of its kind in the country." It is too late, of course, to do anything about that now. But it is still possible to have an important collection twenty years hence. Further comment and suggestions are invited.

¶ The two most recent additions to the Club's list of out-of-print publications are Ina Coolbrith's *California* (John Henry Nash, 1918) and *Philobiblon* of Richard de Bury (The Grabhorn Press, 1925). It should be announced also that no sets remain of either the Club's Mining Towns or Western Authors series. A number of the individual parts of both series are, however, still on hand and a list of these will be furnished on request.